

**DATE: May 19, 2015**

**To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager**  
**Through: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager**  
**From: Mark D. Ahrendsen, Director of Transportation**  
**Subject: Grant Agreement between the City of Durham and the U.S. Department of Transportation – TIGER Grant for the Duke Belt Line Trail Master Plan**

### **Executive Summary**

The City of Durham has been awarded a TIGER Discretionary Grant by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) to prepare a master plan for the Duke Belt Line Trail. The federal grant amount is \$222,700, with a local match from the City of Durham of \$75,000. For the project to move forward, the City Council must approve a CIP Ordinance and a resolution accepting the funds and authorizing the City Manager to execute the grant agreement with USDOT in the amount of \$297,700. The FY 2015-16 General Capital Improvement Project Ordinance will be coming before Council during the same agenda cycle as this item, and that ordinance includes the appropriation of \$297,700 for the Duke Belt Line Trail Master Plan.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a grant agreement in the amount of \$297,700 with USDOT for the purpose of preparing the Duke Belt Line Master Plan.

### **Background**

In 2014 the City applied for and was awarded funding through the TIGER FY 2014 grant program to prepare a master plan for the Duke Belt Line Trail corridor. The Duke Beltline Trail would be a 2.2 mile trail built on the location of a rail corridor that is no longer in use. For many years there has been interest in converting the rail corridor into a bicycle and pedestrian connection between downtown Durham and neighborhoods to the north and east. The Belt Line Trail is recommended by both the adopted Downtown Durham Master Plan and the Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan.

Following the approval of the agreement, the City of Durham will solicit proposals and select a consultant to assist the City in developing the Master Plan. The Master Plan will include the following components:

- Public Participation Strategy
- Project Vision, Goals & Objectives
- Existing Conditions & Corridor Features
- ROW, Utility Covenant & Easement Review
- Title VI/Environmental Justice Analysis
- Analysis of Existing Bridges
- Analysis of Economic, Social & Health Impacts
- Safety & Security Evaluation
- Trail Development Guidelines
- Development of Phasing & Funding Strategy
- Development of Construction Cost Estimates
- Development of Maintenance Cost Estimates
- Development of Physical Design Recommendations
- Review of Potential Rail Line Abandonment or Sale of Individual Parcels
- Development of Implementation Program (Acquisition and Funding Strategies)
- Development of Final Plan Document, Public Presentations, and Project Deliverables

The project outreach and engagement approach will include close coordination with City departments and advisory boards, adjacent property owners, interested downtown business representatives, and local civic and neighborhood associations.

It is anticipated that the master plan will take from 12 to 18 months from start to finish. The dates included in the grant agreement are conservative in order to account for unforeseen circumstances that may arise.

### **Alternatives**

The Durham City Council could decide to:

- Approve the recommended resolution; or,
- Send the item back to staff for further review; or,
- Not approve the resolution.

### **Financial Impacts**

The federal TIGER funds require a local match of up to \$75,000 (the minimum required local contribution is \$55,675, which is 20 percent, but in applying for the TIGER grant the City stated its willingness to provide a match of \$75,000). Funds are available in the Transportation operating budget. The administration of the project will also require a commitment of staff resources.

### **SDBE Summary**

The municipal agreement with USDOT requires that federal procedures be followed for these projects. The Department of Equal Opportunity/Equity Assurance did not review this item for compliance with the Ordinance to Promote Equal Business Opportunities in City Contracting.

**Attachments:**

Attachment A – Resolution

Attachment B – USDOT Grant Agreement for the Duke Belt Line Master Plan

Attachment C – Map of the Duke Belt Line Corridor